

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

TREASURY

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COGARD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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COGARD FOR POLAD

ME.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 17 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. INDOCHINA

ANTI-CORRUPTION RCS ARRANGE MEETING WITH LEADER OF
BUDDHIST-BACKED MOVEMENT FOR "NATIONAL RECONCILIATION"
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TO SEEK COOPERATION IN GROWING OPPOSITION TO THIEU.
POLITICAL ANALYSTS SAY COOPERATION BETWEEN BUDDHIST
LONG-TIME OPPONENTS OF GVN AND SECTIONS OF CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY, THAT TRADITIONALLY SUPPORTED ANTI-COMMUNIST

POLICIES OF SUCCESSIVE GOVTS, COULD BE FORMIDABLE -
"IF IT MATERIALIZES" (WP).

AUTHORITIES SAY DISGRUNTLED RANGER OFFICER BLEW UP
AIR VN JET DURING HIJACK ATTEMPT. POLICE IDENTIFY HIM
AS LIEUT., RECENTLY DEMOTED FROM CAPT. FOR CAR THEFT,
WHO WAS WELL-KNOWN AROUND DA NANG AS "HEAVY DRINKER,
WOMANIZER, AND GAMBLER" (CHITRIB). EXACTLY WHY OFFICER,
WHO ;SMOOTH-TALKED" WAY PAST SECURITY CHECK, SET OFF
GRENADES IS NOT KNOWN, NOR HIS REASON FOR TRYING
HIJACK PLANE TO NVN (PHINQ).

IN FIRST TERRORIST ACT IN SAIGON ATTRIBUTED TO COMMUNISTS
SINCE C-F, POLICE SAY GOVT OFFICE BOMBED WITH FIVE
WOUNDED. GVN SAYS REMOVAL OF US OIL RIG FROM DISPUTED

WATERS BETWEEN SVN AND CAMBODIA LESSENER TENSIONS
BUT FAILED TO SOLVE BASIC PROBLEM OF OFFSHORE OIL
RIGHTS (PHINQ).

THREE-YEAR-OLD SVN GIRL IS IN INTENSIVE CARE WARD IN
HOUSTON HOSPITAL AWAITING TESTS TO SEE IF DOCTORS
CAN SAVE HER LIFE. CHILD SUFFERS FROM HEART DEFECT,
ARRIVED IN US 9/15, AND PHYSICAL CONDITION MUST BE
BUILT UP BEFORE TESTS (AP, NYT).

VIENTIANE SIDE SPOKESMAN SAYS EMMET KAY WILL BE RELEASED
9/18, ONE DAY EARLIER THAN SCHEDULED. KAY WILL BE
FLOWN FROM SAM NEUA AND RELEASED TO CUSTODY OF AMB.
WHITEHOUSE. PL FORMALLY NOTIFIED JOINT COMMISSION TO
IMPLEMENT C-F IN LETTER, BUT GAVE NO REASON FOR
CHANGE IN SCHEDULE (UPI, CHITRIB).

2. CHINA

FULBRIGHT SAYS THAT DURING HIS CHINA VISIT HE FOUND
"ALMOST NO INTEREST" IN NIXON RESIGNATION AND HIS
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REPLACEMENT BY FORD; 'WE VOLUNTEERED TO TELL THEM
THAT AS WE UNDERSTAND IT THE CHANGE IN PERSONALITY
DOES NOT MEAN A CHANGE IN POLICY, BUT THERE WERE NO
QUESTIONS ABOUT IT" (AP SUN, PHINQ).

3. KOREA

SEOUL DIPLOMATIC SOURCES REPORT THAT ROKG AND GOJ,
AFTER US MEDIATION, HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT -- TO BE
ANNOUNCED SIMULTANEOUSLY SEPT. 17 IN TOKYO AND SEOUL
-- ENDING THEIR QUARREL OVER ALLEGED JAPANESE INVOLVE-
MENT IN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON PARK. SK REPORTEDLY
WILL ACCEPT ORAL, RATHER THAN WRITTEN, GOJ PLEDGE TO

CONTROL CHOSEN SOREN ACTIVITIES (AP, NYDN). AMB. SNEIDER SAYS US HOPES SK AND JAPAN "CAN REACH AN AMICABLE SOLUTION, ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH OF THEM, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE' (CHITRIB).

4. JAPAN

DUTCH OFFICIALS SAY "DIFFICULT DECISIONS" LIE AHEAD IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR NINE CAPTIVES HELD BY JAPANESE TERRORISTS AT FRENCH EMBASSY IN THE HAGUE (AP, SUN; CSM).

KYOTO POLICE NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY SANKEI SHIMBUN REPORT THAT HASHISH AND LSD SMUGGLED INTO JAPAN FROM BLACK PANTHER EXTREMISTS IN US OVER PAST SEVEN YEARS

WERE SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR JAPANESE RED ARMY (REUTER KYOTO).

5. PHILIPPINES

UPI (MANILA) REPORTS MOSLEM REBELS SACKED TWO VILLAGES IN SOUTHERN PHILS MONDAY, KILLING FIVE AND BURNING 30 HOUSES BEFORE FLEEING (CHITRIB, NYDN, WP, NYT).

SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS MONDAY IN PEKING AND MANILA STATED THAT MRS. MARCOS WILL MAKE GOODWILL VISIT TO PRC AS SPECIAL REP OF PRES MARCOS FROM SEPT. 20-27 UNCLASSIFIED

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AT INVITATION OF CHOU EN-LAI. ANNOUNCEMENT SAID FIRST LADY AND HER PARTY WILL EXPLORE WITH PRC LEADERS ADDITIONAL AREAS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY IN FIELDS OF CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, TOWARDS EVENTUAL NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS (AFP, WP).

6. TIMOR

AP (SYDNEY) REPORTS PORTUGAL IS PREPARED TO LET TIMOR BECOME INDEPENDENT, RETAIN SOME FORM OF ASSOCIATION WITH LISBON, OR ARRANGE ANNEXATION WITH INDONESIA (CHITRIB).

7. COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

INDOCHINA

S-N'S BRADSHER (SEPT 16) IN SAIGON SAYS GREATEST POLITICAL FERMENT IN SEVERAL YEARS APPEARS BUBBLING TO SURFACE IN SVN, AMID MOUNTING SENSE OF IMPENDING CHANGE. FACTORS OF FERMENT INCLUDE QUESTIONS ABOUT

FUTURE OF US POLICY FOLLOWING NIXON RESIGNATION,
REDUCTION OF US AID CUTTING INTO ARVN'S CAPABILITY,
AND WORSENING ECON SITUATION FEEDING WIDENING ANGER
AT OFFICIAL CORRUPTION AND IMPATIENCE WITH CONTROL
IN GENERAL.

OBSERVES THREE NEW GROUPINGS PROVIDING FOCUS FOR
WHAT EUROPEAN DIPLOMAT CALLS "DESTABILIZATION" OF
SAIGON POLITICAL SITUATION: "PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT AGAINST
CORRUPTION, FOR NATIONAL SALVATION AND PEACE RESTORATION"
LAUNCHED IN JUNE BY CONSERVATIVE RC PRIESTS; "COMMITTEE
FOR FREEDOM OF PRESS AND PUBLICATION" ESTABLISHED
TWO WEEKS AGO BY OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF NAT ASSY
AND PUBLISHERS; AND "FORCES FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION"
LED BY BUDDHISTS, WHO HELD INTRODUCTORY MEETING LAST

SATURDAY. WITH EXCEPTION OF SOME RC PRIESTS, MOST
PEOPLE LEADING THESE GROUPS HAVE LONG OPPOSED THIEU.
THEIR COMMON THEME IS NEED TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION
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OF POLITICAL PROVISIONS OF C-F AGREEMENT.

BRADSHER VIEWS SITUATION AS PRESENTING THIEU WITH
GREATEST DOMESTIC CHALLENGE SINCE SIMULTANEOUS
CONFRONTATIONS IN 1970 WITH BUDDHISTS, STUDENTS AND
DISABLED VETS AND DEMONSTRATIONS IN 1971 TOUCHED OFF
BY THIEU'S UNCONTESTED REELECTION AS PRES. THIEU
SMASHED EARLIER THREATS BY POLICE TOUGHNESS AND
POLITICAL MANEUVERING; NOW POLICE ARE BEING CAREFULLY
KEPT IN RESERVE. SOME DIPLOMATS SUGGEST ONE REASON
FOR CAUTION MIGHT BE CURRENT CONSIDERATION OF VIET
AID BY US CONGRESS, WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD NOT TAKE
KINDLY TO BRUTALITY. HOWEVER, FEW OBSERVERS UNDER-
ESTIMATE THIEU'S ABILITY TO MANEUVER OUT OF THIS
SITUATION, AS HE HAS DONE BEFORE. ONLY POSSIBILITY
OF DISSENSION WITHIN HIS OWN ADMIN - SUBJECT OF MUCH
WHISPERED SPECULATION - LIMITS HIS MANEUVERABILITY.
GREATEST POTENTIAL CHALLENGE COMES FROM BUDDHISTS,
ACCORDING BRADSHER.

8. THAILAND

CHITRIB'S ROLLOW IN BANGKOK WRITES FEATURE ON US
MIL PRESENCE IN THAILAND WHICH BY YEAR'S END WILL
BE AROUND 27,000, DOWN FROM 35,000 LAST YEAR AND
FROM 45,000 PEAK WHEN THAILAND WAS MAJOR STAGING
BASE FOR BOMBING RAIDS DURING INDOCHINA WAR.
BETWEEN 350 AND 400 AIRCRAFT CURRENTLY REMAIN,
COMPARED WITH 700 WHEN US BOMBING OF INDOCHINA
ENDED. SAYS US OFFICIALS HOPE THEY CAN CONTINUE
TO HAVE REDUCED BUT LONG-TERM MIL PRESENCE AS

INDOCHINA DETERRENT AND STABILIZING INFLUENCE IN REGION, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE QUICK TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR PLANS DEPEND ON RTG WISHES.

COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES WILL PROBABLY BE POTENT ISSUE IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS, ROLLOW MAINTAINS; POLITICIANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO RESPOND TO CURRENT WAVE OF NATIONAL PRIDE AND INDEPENDENCE SWEEPING COUNTRY. FOR THE MOMENT, SANYA IS BALANCING POPULAR CALLS FOR QUICK AND COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL WITH ADVICE UNCLASSIFIED

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HE IS GETTING FROM HIS APPREHENSIVE MIL ADVISORS. HIS GOVT IS OFFICIALLY COMMITTED TO COMPLETE US WTHDRAWAL, ON THE ONE HAND, BUT ON THE OTHER STATES THAT TIMETABLE MUST BE "IN CONSONANCE WITH SECURITY

REQUIREMENTS IN THE REGION."

ROLLOW SAYS IF DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES IN US AND THAILAND DO NOT RULE OUT REDUCED BUT LONG-TERM US MIL PRESENCE IN THAILAND, THERE IS SPECULATION THAT ONE OF BASES WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO BE LARGELY AMERICAN IS AT UTAPAO.

9. JAPAN

LAT'S JAMESON (SEPT 15) IN TOKYO CHARACTERIZES TANAKA'S CURRENT TRIP AS UNDERSCORING JAPAN'S COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN LATIN AMERICA AND CANADA. SAYS TRIP IS ALSO REGARDED AS ATTEMPT TO ADD NEW DIMENSION IN DIPLOMATIC AND CULTURAL TIES, ADDING THAT MANY ORDINARY JAPANESE SEE TRIP AS ATTEMPT BY TANAKA, WHOSE POPULARITY HAS SHOT DOWN AS FAST AS INFLATION HAS SHOT UP UNDER HIS ADMIN, TO PROP UP HIS PERSONAL IMAGE IN PREPARATION FOR SECOND TERM BID AS LDP PRES NEXT SUMMER.

10. PHILIPPINES

LAT'S MCARTHUR (SEPT. 15) IN MANILA REVIEWS DEVELOPMENTS FOLLOWING MARCOS' "NEW SOCIETY" REFORMS" AND IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW. OBSERVES THAT BUSTLE OF MANILA BEARS OUT CLAIM THAT MARTIAL LAW BROUGHT GOOD MEASURE OF ECON STABILITY AND HEALTH, BUT IS OF IMPRESSION THAT RICH CONTINUE GETTING RICHER WHILE POOR ARE TOO NUMEROUS TO HAVE BENEFITED MUCH FROM PROGRAMS THAT DO SEEP DOWN. CHIEF BENEFICIARIES OF NEW SOCIETY ARE TOURISTS, COMING IN GREATER NUMBERS EACH YEAR, WHO HAVE SPREAD WORD THAT OLD-SHOOT-EM-UP DAYS IN MANILA ARE GONE. HOWEVER, THOSE WITH INSIDE KNOWLEDGE SAY WHILE CRIMES OF VIOLENCE HAVE DECREASED, CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY ARE ON RISE BECAUSE OF INFLATION.

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SAYS WHEN MARCOS WAS FIRST ELECTED IN DEC. 1965, MANY THOUGHT THEY SAW CURTAIN RISING ON ASIAN CAMELOT. EROSION OF PHIL POLITICS HAD ALREADY DIMMED THIS VISION WHEN MARCOS PROCLAIMED MARTIAL LAW TWO YEARS AGO - JAILING HIS PRINCIPAL OPPONENTS AND THEN 18,000 OTHER PEOPLE - AND INSURED HIMSELF OF PRESIDENCY INTO INDEFINITE FUTURE. THOSE WHO WATCHED PHILS, HOWEVER, WERE INCLINED TO BE FORGIVING, SINCE IT WAS DEMONSTRABLE THAT POLITICAL AND ECON SYSTEM WAS BREAKING DOWN. SENSITIVE FILS RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR PREVIOUS SYSTEM WAS ULTIMATELY UNWORKABLE, BUT IT CONTAINED FEATURES THEY GREW TO

CHERISH; THEY GREW ACCUSTOMED TO PERSONAL FREEDOMS SELDOM FOUND ELSEWHERE IN ASIA AND ALL SIGNS INDICATE THEY ARE GROWING RESTIVE WITHOUT THEM, HOWEVER MUCH A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE SYMPATHIZE WITH STATED NEW SOCIETY GOALS.

HEARST'S KINGSBURY SMITH (BALTO N-A SEPT 16) IN ROME SAYS MARCOS HAS PROVED BENEVOLENT, PROGRESSIVE DICTATOR, WHO IS GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGED TO ENJOY ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF FILS. CITES AMONG MARCOS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS, TRANSFORMING PHILS FROM CRIME-RIDDEN COUNTRY FACING POLITICAL AND ECON CHAOS, REBELLION AND TERROR INTO ALMOST ENTIRELY PEACEFUL NATION WITH BOOMING ECON. CONCEDES THAT PRICE FOR PROGRESS HAS BEEN LOSS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES; BUT CITES DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS THAT GREAT MASS OF PEOPLE APPEAR MORE INTERESTED IN DEVELOPMENT OF PEACEFUL AND ECONOMICALLY PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY. OBJECTIVE SURVEYS OF PHIL DEVELOPMENTS SINCE MARCOS ASSUMED AUTHORITARIAN RULE, SUCH AS THOSE CONDUCTED BY TUFTS PROF SCOTT THOMPSON AND HIGHLY REPUTABLE BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF CONFLICT, CONFIRM THAT MARCOS HAS ACHIEVED REMARKABLE PROGRESS IN HIS EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH NEW SOCIETY. CITES ALSO BETH DAY'S BOOK, "SHATTERED SHOWCASE OF DEMOCRACY IN ASIA," TO BE PUBLISHED IN US ON SEPT. 19, AS SHOWING MARCOS STEADILY GAINING SUPPORT FROM FORMER SKEPTICS AND POLITICAL OPPONENTS, INCLUDING SOME RADICAL REFORMERS WHO ONCE PLOTTED TO ASSASSINATE HIM.

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11. NEW ZEALAND

FROM WELLINGTON, DENIS WEDERELL (CSM) EXPECTS NEW PM ROWLING TO CONTINUE KIRK'S PROGRAMS BUT CHANGE THEIR

PRIORITIES. ROWLING'S FIRST EMPHASIS WILL BE ON
MAINTAINING FIRM BUT CAUTIOUS FINANCIAL POLICY - ONE
OF IMPOSING EVER-TIGHTENING CREDIT SQUEEZE AS NZ'S
TERMS OF TRADE HAVE TURNED SOUR AGAIN.

CONTENDS THAT IF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WIN LESS ATTENTION
FROM ROWLING THAN FROM KIRK, IT WILL NOT BE DEFAULT;
THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES WITH US, AUSTRALIA, UK OR
ANY OTHER OF NZ'S DEFENSE PARTNERS WHICH NEED
ATTENTION, AND KIRK PUT NZ'S RELATIONS WITH ASIA ON
FIRM AND FRIENDLY FOOTING. THIS LEAVES ROWLING FREE
TO CONCENTRATE ON STEADYING ECONOMY, MAINTAINING BUSINESS
CONFIDENCE, AND BUILDING LP STRENGTH IN HOPE OF WINNING
SECOND TERM IN GENERAL ELECTIONS DUE NOV. 1975. KISSINGER

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